

Quaker Service Australia (QSA)

PART A: REPORT

Achievements/Activities

QSA worked with partners in four regions, supporting fifteen development projects in Uganda, India, The Philippines, Zimbabwe and Cambodia, and First Nations and Refugee and Asylum projects in Australia. This work included:

- a new peace project in Cambodia reducing conflict and strengthening collaboration in ethnically diverse communities with Khmer language skills for 70 disadvantaged Vietnamese children;
- 359 Ugandan farmers confidently applying new organic farming skills to improve banana agronomy, soil fertility and water conservation for climate-adaption and food security;
- Three projects in Tamil Nadu, India, providing training to 2,174 people enabling greater environmental awareness, changes to agricultural practices and encouragement of more traditional food crops and animals more suited to local situations.
- Two projects forming links in First Nations communities leading to a business plan for native plant nursery in Queensland and workshops to assist communities in drawing up project success indicators that are more respectful and reflection of Indigenous sense of place and country.

4,566 people participated directly in the international projects this year, including 847 children and young people.

QSA allocated AUD 561,875 to international projects in the year ending in September 2022, with AUD 176,813 funded from QSA supporter funds, and AUD385,062 facilitated by Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT) Funding.

Individual supporters have remained strong and faithful in funding projects, along with great support from the Quaker Shop in Adelaide, The Friends' School and the wider Quaker community. Bequests make a big difference in being able to fund new project initiatives and live out the Quaker testimonies by allowing timely action to support communities in need.

QSA was engaging in and sharing about its work with other Quaker initiatives such as the Australia Yearly Meeting First Nation Peoples Concerns Committee and the joint meeting with FWCC-AWP and FPT AWP. QSA staff also continue to engage actively with the wider sector through engagement with Australian Cooperation for International Development (ACFID) and with the Church Agency Network.

This year we farewelled two people who've been with QSA for a total of 46 years! John Dundas has been our Finance officer since 1999, working as a volunteer. To say that John has been dedicated and reliable does not seem to reflect deeply enough the time and energy he has given to QSA.

Jackie Perkins has been the Executive Administrator since QSA moved to Sydney from Hobart in 1999 and full time in that role since 2004. Jackie has been the face and heart of QSA and led QSA through the transformation of QSA into a company. As she resigned from the position people in the sector as well as within the Quaker community could testify to her significant contribution and impact – which has positively affected partners and communities alike.

Pia Reiersen joined QSA as the new Executive Administrator in January (2023) with experience from other non-governmental organisations, including Act for Peace.

Issues/Analysis

As COVID-19 continued to impact countries worldwide, QSA supported partners as they adapted projects to deal with the pandemic's ongoing health, economic and social effects. As health-related restrictions eased, most project activities returned to the "new normal". However, with limited resources, many project participants face extraordinary hardships as the pandemic's economic impact continues to affect the most vulnerable families. Partners continue to look for new and innovative ways to support the communities.

QSA recognises the importance of communicating about its work and organised two e-learning events in the last year. However, we recognise that communicating effectively about its work with the wider community is a continuing challenge, as highlighted in the AYM review of QSA in 2021. This is amongst the issues being addressed by a small committee of participation from members of AYM and QSA.

QSA is planning an information session in May focusing on seeing our projects through the lens of equality, and hope that many will join us for this session.

QSA will continue to look for ways to have life-changing impact. Your support and engagement with QSA are so vital to enable our important work to continue with our project partners.

Submitted by: *Therese Douglas, QSA Convenor*

QSA Company, Management Committee members: Therese Douglas (Co-convenor); Rae Litting (Co-convenor); Dan Ong (Treasurer); Garry Duncan (Public Officer); Mary Jane Hogan; Laurel Doel; Pia Reiersen (till December 2022); Aletia Dundas (from February 2023)

Other QSA Company members: Rae Litting (NSWRM); Jo Jordan (SANTRM); Peter Jones (TRM); Lesli Grant (WARM). Vacant: (CRQ) and (QRM). Ex-Officio: AYM Presiding Clerk, AYM Secretary
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